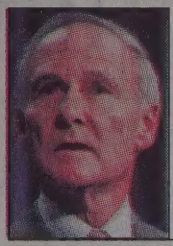
Marriages might be limited

1913 Massachusetts law a barrier for out-of-state couples

Gazette 3-31

THE NEW YORK TIMES



TOM REILLY: State attorney general's interpretation of law could thwart some gay marriages.

GOV. MITT ROMNEY: Asked for delay of May 17 start date for gay marriages.

BOSTON • Same-sex couples living in states, including Colorado, where laws ban gay marriage will not be able to marry in Massachusetts, the state's attorney general said Tuesday.

Although a court has ordered that gay and lesbian couples can begin marrying in Massachusetts on May 17, Attorney General Thomas Reilly said an obscure 1913 state law prevents the state from issuing marriage licenses to couples who are not eligible to be married in their home states.

"I think there's at least 38 states which do not recognize same-sex marriage," Reilly said, referring to the 38 states with laws defining marriage as a heterosexual institution.

He said Massachusetts should give a list of those states to town clerks so they can refuse marriage licenses to people residing there. "They're not entitled to get married in the state of Massachusetts," he said.

Reilly's interpretation of the law could thwart the plans of couples around the country who had been planning to get married in Massachusetts once such unions become legal.

Mary Bonauto, a lawyer for Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, the group that won the Massachusetts case legalizing gay marriage, questioned "whether this law is enforceable" and said it raises "pretty serious questions," including the issue of "treating in-state folks different than out-of-state folks."

Bonauto also said she thinks residents from some of the 38 states might be eligible because only those states whose laws declared same-sex marriages void would directly contradict the Massachusetts statute.

Reilly was at the center of another controversy about gay marriage Tuesday, when he again refused Gov. Mitt Romney's request that he ask a court to delay the May 17 date for starting gay marriage.

Romney asked Reilly to seek a stay after the state Legislature voted Monday to approve a constitutional amendment that would ban gay marriage and create civil unions for same-sex couples. That amendment cannot take effect unless it is approved again in the 2005-06 legislative session and then approved by voters in November 2006.

So unless Romney, a Republican who opposes gay marriage, can find a way to delay the court's ruling, same-sex marriages will be allowed to occur for at least two years before an amendment could begin banning them.

Monday night, Reilly, a Democrat who also opposes gay marriage, said that although he disagrees with the court's decision, he can't find any legal grounds for asking the court to issue a stay.

"Masterpiece Theater."

His role on the show, Cooke once said, was as its headwaiter: "I'm there to explain for interested customers what's on the menu, and how the dishes were composed. But I'm not the chef."

Across the Atlantic, Cooke provided British radio audiences with his "Letter from America" for 58 years, offering insights on anything from the World Series me Street" parody featuring the Cookie Monster as "Alistair Cookie."

Cooke published 12 books, including "Alistair Cooke's America" (1973), which sold more than 800,000 copies in hard cover.

He was host of the "Omnibus" television program in the United States from 1952 to 1961 and presented "Masterpiece Theatre" on PBS from 1971 to 1992.

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NATION

Board draws up strict rules for na

THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON • An independent panel of experts created by The Nature Conservancy last year to revamp the environmental group's operations has issued a final report calling for sweeping reforms that the group hopes will become a model of ethical standards for nonprofit organizations.

The panel is urging the Conservancy to make its finances more public, to scrutinize tax deductions taken by its donors and to vow to "walk away" from financial transactions that don't meet the proposed standards.

Conservancy board members and their companies should be barred from selling land to the Conservancy or buying property from the group, the report says, and the Conservancy's conflict of interest policy for board members and executives should be extended to cover major donors of cash or land.

The report also says board members and their companies should not enter into "cause-related marketing" campaigns with the Conservancy, where the group's logo is stamped on products and used in ads.

The panel urges the Arlington, Va.-based nonprofit to bar its board members and their companies from claiming federal income tax deductions for giving land to the charity.

The recommendations come in a 28-page report prepared in six months by an outside committee led by Ira Millstein, a New York lawyer and expert on business ethics.

Other panelists include former Harvard University president Derek Bok and former Los Angeles Times publisher Richard Schlosberg III.

The Conservancy, the world's largest environmental organization, created the panel last year after articles in The

Paralyzed driver survives 36 hours on freewa

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

dead body, but he was there and he was very much alive."

grabbed the concrete barrier and just went down."